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Have you been called to a meeting with a University Administrator to discuss a complaint or concern? KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

As an UTFA member, you have rights you can assert in this situation, including these:

1. **TIME TO SEEK UTFA REPRESENTATION:** You have the right to reschedule the proposed **meeting** to a time when you can have support and representation from UTFA present. You can use wording like this: “I have received your request to meet. I will get back to you about scheduling after I have had the opportunity to seek advice from UTFA.”
2. **UTFA REPRESENTATION:** You have the right to have a representative of UTFA’s Legal & Advice team (“UTFA L&A Rep”) assist you. UTFA’s L&A team has in-depth knowledge of University of Toronto policies and practices, successful arguments used in similar cases, and accepted principles of procedural fairness. They can help you prepare for the meeting and, if appropriate, attend the meeting with you and assert your rights. To reach an UTFA representative, write to advice@utfa.org with a copy of the communication you received regarding the meeting and any other relevant information.
3. **MORE INFORMATION:** You have the right to request additional information in advance of the meeting. Specifically, you can ask the person who requested the meeting to share the reason(s) for the meeting (including the nature of any complaint against you), a copy of any University policy they are relying on (or are alleging you have violated, along with the nature of the violation), and any other documents that you may be asked to respond to during the meeting. We recommend consulting with an UTFA L&A Rep before sending any communication of this kind to the person who requested the meeting, including to discuss whether the request for more information should come from the UTFA L&A Rep.

4. **TIME TO DELIBERATE:** You have the right to carefully consider your response to any questions or allegations before you respond. In some circumstances, your UTFA L&A Rep can also speak on your behalf.

If you are meeting with the Administration without an UTFA L&A Rep present, you have the right to say something like this: *"I am listening carefully and taking notes, but I will need to take time following this meeting to think about what you have said and seek advice. I will get back to you as soon as possible after that."* If the person you are meeting insists that you respond right away during the meeting and you are not comfortable doing so, you can keep reiterating some version of this: *"I can get back to you with my response after I have had a chance to think about it further."* *(Please note that this advice is relevant only for initial meetings: if you have been called to a formal investigation interview in response to a complaint against you, or a follow-up meeting with an Administrator, we recommend meeting with an UTFA L&A rep in advance to prepare and have the rep attend the meeting with you.)*

5. **TIME TO CONSULT:** You have the right to ask for a break at any time during the meeting to consult privately with your UTFA L&A Rep. You can say something like this: *"I would like to caucus with my UTFA representative before answering that question"* or *"Before we move on, I'd like to confer with my UTFA rep."*

If you are meeting with the Administration without an UTFA L&A Rep present and something happens that concerns you, you have the right to temporarily suspend the meeting at any time to ask for advice. You can say something like this: *"At this time, I need to pause this conversation so that I may seek UTFA representation"* (or, *"I am invoking my right to have an UTFA representative present"*) and *"My UTFA representative will be in touch with you to reschedule the remainder of this meeting."*

6. **A RECORD:** You have the right to document your meeting with the Administration/the investigator. When you attend the meeting, document, document, document! You and your UTFA representative should take careful notes at the meeting. This documentation is essential as a record of the substance of the discussion, as memories fade over time. UTFA can refer to these notes when representing you and to inform next steps. You or your representative can also ask at the end of the meeting, *"Could you please email me a copy of the questions you asked me today in case I wasn't able to capture everything in my notes?"*

It is important to note that UTFA members do not have a right to refuse a reasonable request to meet with a member of the Administration or an investigator engaged by the Administration. However, depending upon the circumstances, there may be a way to come to an agreement about receiving their concerns or answering their questions another way (in writing, for example). Your UTFA L&A Rep can advise you.

If you are asked to attend a formal meeting with an investigator concerning a complaint filed against you, please reach out to UTFA (via advice@utfa.org) immediately for advice in advance of the first meeting. We recommend that you do not attend these meetings unprepared or unaccompanied by an UTFA L&A rep.

Any questions about being called into a meeting with the Administration to discuss a complaint or concern that are not answered here? Please contact advice@utfa.org for more information.

This is the first in a series of “[Know Your Rights as an UTFA Member](#)” communications prepared by the **University of Toronto Faculty Association (UTFA)**. It was created in response to UTFA members’ concerns, and a pattern of troubling requests by the Administration. UTFA has also filed [an Association grievance](#) related to the Administration’s failure to establish minimum protections to ensure reasonable, appropriate, impartial, and procedurally fair investigations.

This communication has been provided for general informational purposes only and should not be considered or relied upon as legal advice or opinion.

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